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ABSTRACT

This report describes issues relating to rural teacher preparation and inservice opportunities. Among these issues are: the need to prepare teachers for the rural education experience; the characteristics of success to be developed by teachers in rural settings; programs and strategies to engender those characteristics; and the considerable obstacles to be overcome by those whose mission is teacher preparation. The report begins by exploring the number and nature of rural schools in the U. S. Northwest and how recent educational reform initiatives have affected these schools. The role of the rural teacher in carrying out reform initiatives is then discussed, particularly in light of expectations held for teacher performance. Next, how teacher preparation programs develop educators for these expectations is examined. Finally, an ideal rural teacher development program is conceptualized to emphasize the need for additional support for training rural teachers to acquire the skills and knowledge they need to engage in ongoing school improvement. Recommendations are given in the areas of technology, exchange teachers and professors, university/school partnership, preservice preparation of rural teachers, inservice and professional development for rural teachers, career ladders, community/school partnerships, teaching contracts, and local student-teacher supervisors. "Model Standards for Beginning Teacher Licensing and Development, Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC)" is appended. (Contains 72 references.) (ND)

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THE Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

PROGRAM REPORT

GREAT EXPECTATIONS: PREPARING RURAL TEACHERS FOR EDUCATIONAL REFORM

Prepared by
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and
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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Great Expectations:
Preparing Rural Teachers for Educational Reform

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September 30, 1995

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Purpose of the Report

This report by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL) describes issues relating to rural teacher preparation and inservice opportunities. This topic was selected by NWREL's Rural Education Program Advisory Committee. The committee members include rural educators and business leaders representing Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington. Under the auspices of the Rural Education Program, the Rural Advisory Committee develops and selects an issue that members believe to be of significant concern to rural educators throughout the Northwest. Preparation of teachers for small, rural schools was selected for the 1994-95 school year. Although this issue emerged from Northwest rural educators, rural teacher preparation is also a critical issue to educators in other rural areas of the United States.

Teachers in rural settings have always faced and met daunting challenges beyond their primary mission: *to teach*. That truth, which often calls for the rural teacher to somehow be *more than* is typically expected, has never been more daunting than today. Reform. Standards. Performance assessment. Forging assessment and instruction. Distances seemingly beyond measure. Technology yet incipient. The 20th century as history; the 21st century already arrived within the education context. Truly, contemporary society holds *great expectations* to be met by the rural teacher. So then, how prepared are we, the community at large, to prepare rural teachers to meet our expectations; what does rural teacher preparation entail?

To begin answering these questions, a panel of rural teacher preparation leaders in the Northwest explored the issues, drawing upon their wealth of information and that of national experts to design ideal rural teacher preparation programs. This report describes the documented need to prepare teachers for the rural education experience, the characteristics of success to be developed by teachers in rural setting, programs and strategies to engender those characteristics, and the considerable obstacles to be overcome by those whose mission is teacher preparation.

The report begins by exploring the number and nature of rural schools in the Northwest and how recent educational reform initiatives have affected these schools. The role of the rural teacher in carrying out reform initiatives is then discussed, particularly in light of the expectations held for teacher performance. How teacher preparation programs develop educators for these expectations is next viewed. Finally, an ideal rural teacher development program is conceptualized to emphasize the need for additional support of rural teachers to acquire the skills and instruction to engage in ongoing school improvement.

Foreword

Neither of the women was yet 20 years old. Following completion of high school in nearby Twin Falls, they had enrolled at the State Normal School at Albion, Idaho. The two-year program had concentrated their studies on teaching humanities, mathematics, natural science, Latin and the language arts. A campus school located in the training building had given them opportunity to observe and practice their new profession. They were inspired by the teaching of Dr. John Dewey who sought practicality and group effort in solving problems. The school board of Fairview School District No. 24 had hired them both sight unseen but with assurances that they were "well qualified." It was September 3, their first day at their new job site. School would begin September 8, the Tuesday after Labor Day.

The facilities included a two-room school partitioned approximately for eighteen younger children aged 5-11 and twelve youngsters ages 12 to 16. The room for the upper grades was called the "big room," referencing the older, "bigger" youngsters. In the rear of the building some 20 yards away two "outhouses" plainly marked *boys* and *girls* stood as a first bulwark against incessant wind. To the left of the outhouses was a two-room teacherage, a necessary recruiting tool for teachers serving in the isolated and remote district. Both teachers began making mental notes about getting ready for the school year. Anxious and excited? Yes.

The young women were not averse to work. In fact, both had "hashed" during their college years to assist in paying for their schooling. The tasks to make the physical facilities ready didn't seem too daunting. Without a principal, immediate supervisor, or custodian, and no check sheets to follow, they began their "to do" list guided mainly by insight and intelligence.

The list began with the tasks that would be most apparent and readily observed by patrons, should they choose to visit Fairview School No. 24. They knew that parents would be checking. The list reads:

1. Rake and remove rocks and sticks from play area

2. Disinfect the outhouse with chlorinated lime (there should be a large sack of it in the coal storage area)

3. Oil the classroom floors (making certain that the areas around the large stoves were free of too much accumulation of oil)

4. Clean the two stoves and determine the appropriate clinker and ash disposal point

5. Inspect the chimneys for each stove of creosote accumulations

6. Clean and season the black boards

7. Make an ink supply and begin tempering the pen points

8. Determine the requisition needs (include colored chalk)

9. Mend texts

10. Caulk the west windows (wheat paste and paper mache should work)

11. Inspect coal supply (not delivered yet)

12. Clean area around hitching rail (many youngsters rode their horses to school and accumulations of horse manure had not been disposed of from last spring)

13. Wash windows

14. Plan bulletin boards

15. Examine student records

16. Make a map of district and begin to associate children with houses

17. Find out which parents might help out

18. Begin a collection of clothes for those children in need

19. Inspect the First Aid supplies and the school for unsafe or dangerous situations (two large wasp nests were found and destroyed)

20. Begin a list of items that may be donated (there were no trees, grassy areas or plantings, they noted)

21. Determine how library services could be delivered

22. Determine the location of the nearest phone in the community

23. Make certain that the school bell works and that the rope is secure

24. Check for signs of bats and skunks

25. Eliminate the sources of the mouse droppings

The list was formidable and completion of the tasks time consuming. A top priority would be to find the most responsible older students to assist in the day-to-day work. The women were most concerned about the issue of heating the building. The huge coal burning stove in each room would require constant attention during the winter months. A supply of kindling had been promised but not yet delivered, nor was the coal.

The County Superintendent would visit as soon as she could but with so many schools to contend with, she couldn't promise her inspection before mid-October. She would bring supplies along with instructions for the state assessments necessary for the older students to "pass out" of the eighth grade. The patrons would not be content with student failure to achieve the minimal standards to continue on to high school. After all, they were paying each woman $450.00 for the school term plus the use of the teacherage at $10.00 per month.

The classrooms were large enough to accommodate student work. Three large tables were near the windows. It was determined that some plants were needed (geraniums would be fine). The "big room" also had a set of Denoyer-Geppert maps and a chart of the Animal Kingdom. The shelves in the front of the room appeared to have enough texts in reading and arithmetic, although only five dictionaries could be found, along with a copy of Muldoon's Lessons in Pharmaceutical Latin. Perhaps the families could assist in the development of a library for the children. Portraits of Lincoln and Washington hung in each room. Each of the Peabody desks was attached to the floor in rows with 24 wood screws. Two desks would require a wood-putty filling to eliminate the scars of past idle carving. The ink wells had dried up and would need cleaning and refilling but the building had a sink and an indoor pump. Soap and water; the ideal solvent.

Although the teachers understood the common practice of placing children in grades, they would utilize group work or "committees" to teach cooperation and practical usefulness. Thematic units were expected in natural science, social studies and citizenship. Individual goals were established by the county and state, and teacher guides provided information on achievement for specific outcomes for arithmetic, geography and spelling. Elson-Grey provided a complete reading experience. The older children would assist the little ones whenever possible. The committees would be responsible for the various school programs--especially Christmas.

The news reaching Twin Falls County schools in the fall of 1925 was both exciting and disconcerting. Scotsman John L. Baird had performed the first TV broadcast of moving objects. Adolf Hitler disclosed his philosophies in his book "Mein Kampf." John Scopes was determined to be guilty of teaching evolution. A cap on income tax was proposed at 25 percent by Treasury Secretary Mellon. In May the British Medical Journal cautioned women to avoid silk stockings in cold weather. It was determined that the practice would thicken their ankles. Women had just begun to vote. President Coolidge offered a critique of the new 'flapper' dress distinguished by its drop waist and columnar look. The new teachers, however, were most concerned about their local challenges.

So it was, that the only acceptable vocation/profession for women at the time was teaching. Here were two brilliant young women who today could have the option to be aspiring physicians, architects, attorneys, politicians, scientists or more, were getting school in order for thirty rural Idaho children. Both planning and expecting to make a contribution to the life and experience of individuals whom we now know were part of a generation that forged a new world order after World War II and who produced generations of offspring that sought to forge yet newer orders. Where to next? Will new generations of teachers be as capable and empowered as those of 70 years ago? Will they have the intellectual underpinnings needed? Will they accomplish their purpose? Time will tell.

Adapted from the diary of Ethel Rose Kopf, by her son:
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Moscow, Idaho
April 10, 1995

Introduction

> *Many so-called 'innovations' being championed today were born of necessity long ago in the rural schoolhouse. Cooperative learning, multi-grade classrooms, intimate links between school and community, interdisciplinary studies, peer tutoring, block scheduling, the community as the focus of the study, older students teaching younger ones, site-based management, and close relationships between teachers and students--all characterize rural and small school practices* (Stern, 1994).

Today, as was true 70 years ago, teachers need to be prepared to fulfill multiple roles when teaching in a rural area. The nature of these roles, however, has changed. The move to reform public education in recent years has created a number of regulatory agencies, boards, and committees at national, state, and local levels to research, critique, and develop new standards, thus multiplying the amount of regulations and regulators. In essence, educators must learn to adapt to ever-changing standards on what they should teach and how they should teach. They must participate in training and workshops and stay abreast of all current instructional and assessment practices, participate in educational reform, as well as integrate it and adapt to its chameleon-like guidelines. They also have to balance the expectations of the state legislature, the school board, administrators, their community, professional associations, other teachers, parents, and the students. On top of all of this, they have to build curricula, organize and direct extracurricular activities, be positive role models and teach children--children who are much different than they were 70 years ago; different from even 10 years ago. And, as if this were not enough, the standards and expectations ("reform") are changing every year (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Darling-Hammond et al., 1995).

In addition to adapting to educational reform changes, teachers are having to accommodate to changes in technology. Technology has taken on many new dimensions, moving from the view of technology as a photocopy machine, voice mail or a fax machine to computers and two-way video. Technology has dramatically altered the classroom and requires different skills and qualifications of teachers. The teacher becomes a guide in the learning experience alongside the student (Jones et al., 1995). In some respects technology has reduced the amount of time a teacher must spend on a particular task (i.e., instead of preparing ink, a teacher needs a healthy supply of pencils and pens on hand. As more schoolwork is done on computers, the preparation of supplies may become further reduced). In other regards, technology has created more work for teachers. For example, teachers must be knowledgeable about many different computer software programs, maintain the computer work stations and know how to troubleshoot (Office of Technology Assessment, 1995). Funding and expertise may not abound in rural areas and therefore the rural schools may not be keeping abreast of these technical advances.

The chore of adapting to and meeting all of the expected roles is difficult for ALL teachers. For rural teachers, though, their burden is compounded. Maintenance of the

facility (tending to the stove and coal supply) has given way to maintenance of the educational system itself. Teachers are having to spend more time tracking students and keeping abreast of changes in content and pedagogy. Often rural teachers do not have the networks more easily afforded their nonrural counterparts to help them organize, research and design curricula, to assist with the duties of coaching, club organizing, counseling, bus driving, or to keep them updated and on the forefront of reform discussions. And once again, money is likely scarce so that they also do not have funding available to participate in training and workshops on reform strategies (Mancus & Rodriguez, 1980).

In addition, the students rural teachers instruct are directly affected by changes occurring in the American economy. These students need to be prepared for a much different job market today than previous decades (Threadway, 1992). Different views exist as to the purpose of the rural school, thus adding to the complexity of the rural teacher's role:

- "Historically, rural schools have served a simple purpose: they ensured basic literacy and vocational skills for students who tended to remain within a relatively simple rural economy." (Clarke & Hood, 1986).

- "...the purpose of rural education is to prepare people for successful outmigration." (Threadway, 1992). . .

Today, the economics have changed. Agriculture is on the decline in this country. In fact, in 1990, less than 7 percent of the *rural* workforce was employed in agriculture (farming, forestry, fishing, and other related activities). Even in remote rural counties that lacked a substantial city, less than 10 percent of the workforce worked in agriculture, half as many as in manufacturing (McGranahan, 1994). A rural area may not depend upon its natural resources to maintain its economy. It is clear that this is a long-term problem and one that is not new. Many children who traditionally followed their parent's footsteps and retained similar occupations and lifestyles can no longer do so. Many rural children must move to cities for jobs. The role of education has changed to provide rural children with a wider range of new and different skills in order to help adequately prepare them to adapt to a changing rural economy or adapt to suburban and urban areas (Miller, 1991).

School enrollment, population density, and geographic isolation help define rural regions in the United States. With schools of the rural Northwest facing various economic challenges, schools and communities are working together to face local issues, state education issues and national standards. Following are overviews of the characteristics of the rural Northwest--demographics and educational reform issues.

Characteristics of the Rural Northwest

Constitutionally, the responsibility for educating students in the United States resides with each of the states. Unfortunately, in spite of all the national efforts for equitable education, the child's place of residence still dramatically affects the adequacy or inadequacy of his/her education. Sparsely populated, economically poor, rural communities face a formidable task educating their young people and attracting qualified teachers. In order to know how to prepare teachers to teach, it is important to look at the demographic and geographic makeup of the Northwest region (Beasley, 1988).

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) has shown that 50 percent of our nation's public schools are in small towns/rural areas. Within the Northwest region, the percent of public schools in isolated areas is great: Alaska--83 percent, Idaho--74 percent, Montana--89 percent, Oregon--59 percent and Washington--45 percent (Schools and Staffing Survey, 1990).

In the Northwest, three factors help portray small, rural schools: low enrollment, low population density and isolation (Eselius et al., 1994). These three factors influence the funding equation for the school. Low enrollment (average daily membership) figures mean fewer dollars allotted to the school. Low population density and isolation are associated with a low tax base, and an increased need for transportation and telecommunications.

Enrollment

Given the diversity in student distribution, districts in the Northwest face a variety of school improvement challenges and issues. While districts with larger student enrollment must deal with issues such as overcrowding and demands for increased building-level autonomy, districts with smaller student enrollments deal with issues such as limited course offerings, support services for curriculum, staff development, and special programs.

About one half (45 percent) of the Northwest school buildings have enrollment under 300 students. Nearly three-fourths of schools in Alaska and Montana (70 percent and 75 percent, respectively) are extremely small (Table 1). In Alaska, many of the school communities are referred to as "fly-in" communities--there is no road access. In Montana, many are dubbed "four-wheel drive" communities--they do have roads, but in bad condition or unpaved.

Table 1

Number of Schools by Enrollment

State	Rural Enrollment <300		Other Enrollment 300 to 1500		Urban Enrollment >1500		Total
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent	N
Alaska	340	70%	138	29%	5	1%	483
Idaho	253	46%	298	54%	4	1%	555
Montana	563	75%	183	24%	5	1%	751
Oregon	473	40%	699	59%	12	1%	1,184
Washington	493	29%	1,220	71%	13	1%	1,726
NW Total/Average	2,122	45%	2,538	54%	39	1%	4,699

Of the 2,122 schools in the region which enroll less than 300 students, half of the schools enroll less than 100 students. The region is dotted with one and two room school houses (Eselius et al., 1994). Information from the 1992-93 Common Core of Data indicate that there are 153 schools in the Northwest region which have only one teacher. A few of these schools are detention centers, alternative learning centers or youth service centers, but the majority are elementary and secondary schools (Common Core of Data, 1993).

Population Density

Rurality, in essence, is a measure of population density--the interaction between size of population and size of geographic area. While rural communities are not exclusively agricultural communities, the rural economy tends to focus on the extraction and/or production of natural resources. By definition, rural areas do not have the labor force to support directly large-scale manufacturing, heavy industry, commercial trade, and finance. For schools, this limits the tax base on the one hand, and increases transportation and communication costs on the other hand (Eselius et al., 1994).

According to the 1990 census, two thirds of the school districts in the Northwest region are in settings where 75 percent or more of the residents are classified as rural--living in towns or villages of 2,500 people or less, or in unincorporated areas (Stern, 1994).

Table 2 presents the percent of school districts in the Northwest region which are rural, based on Stern's definition.

Table 2

Rural Districts

State	Percent School Districts that are Rural
Alaska	79%
Idaho	65%
Montana	86%
Oregon	41%
Washington	57%
NW Average	66%

Isolation

Isolation is a separate issue from rurality. Isolation is represented by the relative cost, frequency and ease with which access can be obtained to resources outside the school or district. Communication and transportation are hampered by distance, geography, weather, and the technology available. Telecommunications--telephone, television, and increasingly, computer networks--are today's standard technology for communication. Their efficiency and economic feasibility are measured in user/miles. Isolated areas have extremely low user/mile ratios.

The ramifications for the region's isolated schools and districts include limited access to professional development activities, special services, and opportunities for collaboration, as well as barriers to the attraction and retention of qualified staff. Because of vast distances, public boarding school programs continue to this day in Alaska and Oregon.

Beyond issues of size and sparcity, geographic isolation poses constraints on transportation and communication. Access to goods, services, and professional development opportunities is limited by physical distance. For example, in the four lower states, 51 percent of the school districts are located 30 or more miles from a population center of 15,000 or more (Table 3). With the exception of Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Juneau, essentially all of Alaska is considered to be isolated. Montana is not far behind (Eselius et al., 1994).

Table 3

Isolated Districts

State	Number	Percent
Alaska	53	98%
Idaho	53	46%
Montana	435	81%
Oregon	114	39%
Washington	106	36%
NW Total	761	60%

In the Northwest region, not only are the schools small (45 percent), but they are rural (66 percent) **and** isolated (60 percent) **and** serve the American Indian and Native Alaskan populations **and** meet the educational needs of children below the poverty line. Even though rural communities tend to be pockets of homogeneity, these pockets differ widely from one another. There is a demand for teachers to be prepared to meet these challenges posed by the geography and demographics of the area. For example:

- Aleknagik South Shore, Alaska is accessible only by hovercraft or light plane
- Bynum, Montana is accessible only by 4x4 vehicle
- Stehekin, Washington is accessible only by boat or float plane
- Crane, Oregon which serves the secondary students of ranches is so remote that the school provides a boarding facility during the week
- Lame Deer, Montana has a persistent poverty rate of 89 percent

(Nelson, personal communication, May 1995)

Reform Issues of Importance to Rural Northwest Schools

The Rural Education Program of the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory conducted a survey in the spring of 1995 to determine the priorities of rural school districts in the areas of curriculum, instruction and assessment (Queitzsch, 1995). These priorities directly relate to teacher and school interaction. Knowing the priorities, the teacher will know what to emphasize in the classroom and the direction the school district

wishes to follow in regards to curriculum, instruction and assessment. Table 4 presents the findings from the responses of superintendents, principals and/or lead teachers.

Table 4

Percent of Districts Responding YES to Curriculum, Instructional and Assessment Issues as District Priorities

	Curriculum, Instructional and Assessment Issues	Percent YES
1	Strengthening instructional strategies such as critical thinking and cooperative learning to improve student achievement	83.3%
2	Aligning assessment with curriculum and instruction	81.7%
3	Integrating curriculum across subjects and levels	78.3%
4	Preparing students for the 21st century global marketplace	70.8%
5	Incorporating and meeting state standards and requirements	67.5%
6	Identifying desired learner outcomes and performance goals	67.5%
7	Developing and implementing a process for renewing and restructuring the curriculum	66.7%
8	Developing alternative assessments that are performance-based and authentic	66.7%
9	Specifying the scope and sequence of topics to be covered in various subjects and grades	64.2%
10	Developing special programs for exceptional children	53.3%
11	Implementing research-based teaching strategies	50.0%
12	Developing community-based learning experiences for students	50.0%
13	Establishing textbook and other instructional materials adoption procedures	38.3%
14	Specifying time requirements for the school day, year, and for particular subjects	32.5%
15	Improving the use of standardized testing	32.5%
16	Mandating specific core subjects, such as English and mathematics	30.8%
17	Setting graduation requirements	27.5%
18	Mandating additional instruction, such as HIV/AIDS and the American economic system	25.8%
19	Mandating a testing program at specific grades in critical areas	22.5%
20	Developing special programs for those for whom English is a second language	15.0%

When the respondents were asked about the constraints preventing or hindering the school district from meeting their reform goals, insufficient time, funding, expertise and personnel headed the list (Table 5).

Table 5

Weighted Average Percent for Each Constraint

Constraint		Percent
Insufficient:	Time	22.3%
	Funding	17.9%
	Expertise	14.1%
	Personnel	12.5%
	Technology	7.0%
Lack of Consensus:	in School	7.6%
	in Community	5.1%
No Opportunity to Join:	a Network	2.2%
	a Consortium	1.9%
Problems with Community:	Isolation	5.7%
	Disinterest	2.8%
	Partnerships	.9%
Total		100.0%

These barriers to educational reform add to the difficult job faced by rural teachers. All citizens have the right to public education and nearly everyone has opinions about what they want teachers to be doing. It would not be surprising if teachers are confused and frustrated. The school board may say that a teacher's place is in the classroom, not at a professional development activity located elsewhere. Funding for such activities may not even be available. A university's response might be that a teacher's role is to be a researcher in the classroom and to stay abreast of all current instructional and assessment practices. The community may view the teacher as the person responsible for the education of their children with hopes that their children will become responsible citizens within the community. The state may see the role of the teacher as a reformer, managing change in the classroom. The school district administration might see the teacher as the link between the state's expectations and the district's expectations. The school administration might see the teacher as the classroom role model, in addition to the bus driver, the coach, and the head of all after-school committees. The parents might view the role of the teacher as being responsible for the content material and for other non-measurable such as values. Ultimately, the teacher's question is "how many hats do I wear?" And, "how much input do I have in teaching and educational reform?"

Various Roles of Rural Teachers

A different perception of the teacher's role in the classroom and in the school exists at every level--national, state and local. In rural settings, local issues dominate, and teachers must be prepared to adapt. To best serve students, the rural teacher must have an awareness of the economic base for the geographic area, logging, farming, or tourism, and what the future might hold for that community. With the changes in the economy, rural teachers find themselves engineering for the students a bridge between the rural and urban communities. While many rural students may attend college in urban areas, or enter the city to seek employment, others may stay in the immediate vicinity. The rural teacher must be aware of the skills and knowledge students need to possess to survive in either the rural or the urban realm.

But teachers must also understand their role in the greater context of reform efforts at the district, state and local levels. According to the 1992 National Congress on Rural Education:

> Rural school educators need to develop a shared vision that establishes a public relations program which uses their current accomplishments. Within this program a segment should include the development of a systemic change model that will allow rural education to progress into the 21st century (Nowakowski & D'Amico, 1993).

The rural teacher needs to be aware of the educational issues of importance to their district and be prepared to participate in the resolution. As seen in the survey of Northwest rural school districts, aligning assessment with curriculum and instruction, strengthening instructional strategies to improve student achievement, and integrating the curriculum across subjects and grade levels are areas of concern and focus (Queitzsch, 1995). Within the context of these significant challenges, teachers and students must become researchers together and schools must become places which support teachers as learners (Kincheloe et al., 1992).

When the national purpose of teaching is to prepare students for the 21st century, and the local purpose is to reflect the rural community's norms and values, teachers may experience frustration and confusion about what experiences should be. Once there is a consensus on the purpose of teaching, the rural teacher needs to contend with the realities of multiple course preparations, multiple grade levels and multiple student ability levels, in order to meet the needs of the community and meet national and state standards (Miller, 1994). It is necessary to further explore the expectations of the community and the school of the rural school teacher.

Community Expectations

The community sets expectations for the rural teacher in and out of the school. The local perception of the purpose of teaching reflects what the community wants for their children. For example, the local school board influences what should be taught. Frequently, school board memberships are composites of individuals with differing "community tenure"--some were born and raised in the same community, while some are new faces. Conflicts between traditional and transitional approaches to education and teaching can arise. However, having board members with differing interests can be healthy for school districts.

A rural Idaho teacher stated that one must "be a fine role model on and off the job. Unless you establish yourself as a caring citizen, it doesn't matter what knowledge you have to share." (Batey & Hart-Landsberg, 1993). The rural teacher is a high-profile person in the local community. Outside the academic day, the teacher may be requested to participate in local activities such as teaching Sunday School, or asked to participate in clubs and other activities. Rural teachers have limited time, and they need other diversions, including a social life or just time to reflect. It is important for the community to work with an excellent teacher in order to retain him/her (Batey & Hart-Landsberg, 1993; Campbell, 1985).

School Expectations

Like 70 years ago, a rural teacher needs to be prepared for diverse responsibilities. The role is not defined as researcher or reformer, but as teacher. Today, teachers are expected to update their skills, be an integral part of the school organization, and prepare their students for options upon graduation--stay and live in the local community, or relocate and adjust to more urban settings. The teachers need to expose the students to educational experiences and opportunities that will help them function effectively in both environments (Meier & Edington, 1983). Teachers are expected to help improve the school, the district, and the entire educational system through reform efforts, and add to the knowledge-base of teaching. With this push for reform and research, an extra facet is added to the role of the teacher. Lieberman (1995) suggests that if teachers are to become reformers, then they need opportunities to develop through activities such as workshops, inservice or continuation of formal education.

In short, school expectations of rural teachers include parent-teacher collaboration, assumption of administrative duties, participation in extracurricular activities and continuing education.

Parent-Teacher Collaboration

At the federal level, the eighth National Education Goal states that schools will promote a partnership that will increase parent involvement in the social, emotional, and academic

growth of children. Parent-school partnerships are seen as a vital link to improve student learning. Therefore, teachers are encouraged to include parents in decisions about the curriculum and other facets of educational reform. Time must be set aside for the teacher to work and communicate with the parents. Teachers can gain assistance of parents inside and outside the classroom, thus alleviating some of the other time pressures. By making time to involve and train the parents, the teachers ultimately save time (Riley, 1994).

Conley (1993) points out that the teacher is to have a more personal genuine interaction with the parents and the students, communicating the learning goals more explicitly, and how the individual student may achieve them. This is to encourage parents to become more of a partner in the student's learning process.

Administration Expectations

> In Montana, there are 147 small school districts which have no administrators. There might be a clerk whose duty is to take minutes at meetings and handle basic bookkeeping. In these schools, a teacher is designated as the lead teacher and answers to the school board and to the county superintendent. In these districts, the lead teacher must maintain the instructional role as well as assume the administrative roles (R. L. Anderson, personal communication, July 1995).

This is also true in the state of Washington. In schools of less than 300 students, *one* person usually takes on the roles of the superintendent, the secondary principal, and the elementary principal (Beasley, 1988). Should another school administrator be hired, the cost is drawn from the salary pool, thus affecting the salary of the other teachers. This situation poses conflicted choices for the teachers: a lower salary *or* fewer administrators. With fewer administrators, the teacher needs to be ready to assume some of the administrative workload alongside teaching duties.

With the move towards site-based management, teachers are expected to become active decision-makers concerning local school policy. Leadership in small, rural schools is becoming a shared responsibility between the teachers and the school administrators. In Missouri, teachers from small, rural schools were surveyed as to their desired involvement in school management. The results showed that teachers did in fact want to be involved in the decision-making process, especially when the topics concerned their classroom practices. They showed less interest, however, in school policy, evaluation, teacher placement and duties (Bachus, 1991).

Extracurricular Expectations

Teachers must juggle instructional and non-instructional activities during and outside school hours. Rural teachers work on restructuring committees, network with other teachers, become technologically competent, meet state and district standards, *and* are accountable for students' achievement. In addition, rural teachers find their time devoted to many non-instructional activities. According to Horn (1993), the top ten duties

required of rural/small school teachers which center on supervision of students and activities outside school hours are:

1. Conduct teacher-parent meetings
2. Work at school events (selling tickets, for instance)
3. Supervise halls
4. Supervise lunchroom
5. Attend school events--plays, sports, concerts
6. Supervise grounds/playground
7. Supervise at school events--plays, sports, concerts
8. Serve on curriculum committees
9. Sponsor class organizations (senior class, for instance)
10. Plan/attend school carnivals/fairs or similar fund-raising events

Continuing Education Expectations

For teachers to move up the career ladder or gain knowledge about new instructional methods, it is necessary for the teacher to continue their education, whether it is through inservice, workshops, or graduate courses. For example, one area of research and reform which rural teachers are engaged in is assessment. Many schools are moving from the traditional pen and paper tests to the more goal performance-oriented tests. In the states of Oregon and Washington, performance-based assessments are being implemented. Teachers are having to learn a new method of assessing, interpreting and applying the information to their students, their method of teaching and ability to communicate the information to the parents and school administrators.

Teacher Preparation

Overview

In 1986, the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy suggested a plan for an improved educational system. The following components are directly related to the preparation of teachers (Task Force on Teaching as a Profession, 1986):

- Create a National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, organized with a regional and state membership structure, to establish high standards for what teachers need to know and be able to do, and to certify teachers who meet the standards
- Restructure schools to provide a professional environment for teachers, thus freeing them to decide how best to meet state and local goals for children while holding them accountable for student progress
- Restructure the teaching force, and introduce a new category of Lead Teachers with the proven ability to provide active leadership in the redesign of the schools and in helping their colleagues to uphold high standards of learning and teaching
- Require a bachelor's degree in the arts and sciences as a prerequisite for the professional study of teaching
- Develop a new professional curriculum in graduate schools of education leading to a Master in Teaching degree, based on systemic knowledge of teaching and include internships and residencies in the schools

A number of these standards are being researched and implemented. For example, the National Board for Professional Teaching (NBPT) was formed in 1987 to issue advanced professional standards and a certification system for teachers. In January of 1995, the NBPT put forth a set of standards for teacher certification. Following are five general propositions:

1. Teachers are committed to students and their learning
2. Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students
3. Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning
4. Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience
5. Teachers are members of learning communities (Shapiro, 1995, p. 55)

Another example is the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). In 1987, NCATE began the process of setting teacher preparation standards and accrediting teacher education programs that met their criteria. Arthur E. Wise, President of NCATE, asks, "How can we expect new teachers to perform well on meaningful, performance-oriented licensing examinations if they have not had adequate preparation?" (Wise, 1994). He stresses that to become certified in nearly all professions, one must graduate from a nationally-accredited professional school. This is not true, thus far, in the teaching profession. In keeping with the Carnegie report, NCATE established high standards regarding what teachers need to know and be able to do. They believe that teachers who graduate from accredited programs are better prepared for teaching, and they are working toward making accreditation for schools of education the status quo. Another goal of NCATE that relates to the Carnegie standard is that the organization is striving to increase the prestige of the teaching profession more prestigious.

Yet, with all the push for change and reform, The Holmes Group has indicated that schools of education are dreadful and that teachers are prepared for profit, not for the educational opportunities of the young (Delattre, 1995). The Holmes Group (1986) is a consortium of education deans and chief academic officers. Their proposed changes to teacher education involve a three tier system of teacher licensing: professional teacher, career professional and instructor. The instructor level is temporary and would require a bachelor's degree. In order to become a professional or career teacher and have permanent status, a graduate degree is needed. "Generic undergraduate 'methods' courses must be replaced with subject-matter-oriented studies of teaching and learning." (The Holmes Group, 1986, p. 13). The focus of teacher preparation would be to prepare specialists in content areas, and eliminating the education major.

With the need for generalists in the rural school areas, the proposed change by the Holmes Group could have one of two effects. One being that if the rural teachers needed to be content specialists, then some of the areas of the curriculum would not be covered or covered poorly. The other possible outcome could be that the schools of higher education would have to create a specialized content area called 'rural education' or 'generalist teacher preparation' thus, defeating what The Holmes Group has set out to do.

In Guest's (1993) synthesis of 10 years of reform reports, six themes emerged:

- Schools of education must model the good teaching that they advocate.
- Improvements in teacher training must reflect the teacher's need to understand the learner, the process of learning and the influence of culture upon learners.
- Teachers need to know how to teach, reflecting a strong underpinning of subject-area and pedagogical-content knowledge. They need the ability to model critical thinking, to advance the understanding of their students and to organize information and knowledge so that students can incorporate the same into their personal repertoire.

- Continued research into the practice of teaching is needed.
- Efforts must be made to strengthen and integrate the clinical experience of teachers.
- School of education need to regulate more stringently the selection of teacher education candidates and to recruit underrepresented populations into teaching.
- Improved teacher education should extend beyond the walls of the university, embracing local schools, state policy makers, credentialing organization and others (Guest, 1993, p. 13).

These themes have application on the preparation of all preservice teachers, whether rural or urban. In keeping with the need for the university and the school districts to work together in preparing teachers for rural areas, these six themes would offer a foundation for a rural specific program.

Attributes of a Successful Preservice Program

The emphasis of the educational reform puzzle has been on what students do not know, what students must know, and how much students need to know. Only recently has the *teacher* piece received attention. David Haselkorn, president of Recruiting New Teachers, Inc., a national public service campaign on behalf of the teaching profession, strongly supports this sentiment and believes there ought to be greater emphasis placed on preparing teachers:

> Simply put, by according insufficient attention to the capacity, quality, cultural sensitivity, and diversity of its teacher workforce, the United States puts all of its various education reform and restructuring efforts at risk--because improved student performance will only result from effective teaching by a diverse workforce of qualified, committed teachers (Haselkorn, 1994).

Preservice programs normally reflect a theoretical view of the teacher. Miller (1988) summarizes the teacher preparation components found in many teacher education programs. What differs from program to program is the amount of emphasis they place on any one of the areas of preparation. For a general education degree, academic courses are normally taken from the following content areas: humanities, natural science, social sciences, and math. For a teaching specialization degree, courses are required in the specific academic area in which the teacher will be certified. (For secondary education, it is an academic subject such as English, while at the elementary level, it is usually a broad range of subjects taught in elementary schools). Miller suggests that professional training has three facets:

- *Foundation studies in education.* Courses are to provide a background of the role and nature of education in society, including subjects such as history (history of education), philosophy (purposes of education), psychology (human development), sociology (function of schools in society), and the political and legal basis for education.

- *Generic and specialized teaching knowledge and skill.* General and special courses are to teach students the basics of planning, implementing, and evaluating instruction. Special courses focus on teaching special subjects, i.e. physical education.

- *Field Experiences.* Opportunities are aimed at providing direct classroom experience in the area of preparation. Student teaching is the most common field experience, but there has been a steady trend toward including a broad range of field experiences during professional preparation.

John Goodlad takes the preservice component one step further and recommends a new curriculum for preservice teachers. He further emphasizes the need for clinical experiences and linking the college of education with the schools for an on-going collaboration on preservice and inservice instruction. Goodlad suggests the following three sequences for preservice teacher preparation:

- A pre-education sequence, much like pre-medicine for doctors, giving students a solid, coherent academic foundation, a sophisticated understanding of democracy, and an introduction to the art and science of teaching what they are learning

- A professional education sequence for the study of learning, teaching, and schooling

- Postgraduate sequence of well-supervised practice in clinical schools where ongoing assessment and renewal are standard practices (Clark, 1990, p. 5)

Recent research on preservice teacher education has shown an interest in increasing the amount of field experience. In 1991, Metropolitan Life Insurance Company conducted a survey of American teachers entitled, "The First Year: New Teacher's Expectations and Ideals." Attitudes and expectations of teachers before their first teaching assignment were compared with their attitudes after their first year of teaching. It was found that 60 percent of first year teachers wished they had more practical training. When asked how many of the teachers felt that having a mentor teacher might have helped them in their first year of teaching, 46 percent responded affirmatively. When asked about having a year's internship added to the practical training, 33 percent thought this would have helped prepare them, and 20 percent thought that having better training in working with students and families from a variety of ethnic backgrounds would have been beneficial (Taylor & Leitman, 1991).

With the input of research, policy and reform efforts, there is an emphasis to increase field experiences. Yet, there is not an emphasis on placing a student teacher in an environment which reflects either a rural or urban culture. Through synthesizing the available research and commentaries, two key aspects of teacher preparation surfaced--attributes of a successful teacher preparation program and attributes of a successful teacher. By pulling these two areas together, a step can be taken towards improving or adjusting the current teacher preparation program.

Attributes of a Successful Teacher

In the past, "the only person deemed capable of teaching a class has been an adult with a teaching certificate" (Conley, 1993, p. 257). This statement implies that the person has met certain requirements in order to achieve the certificate. The statement does not imply that the candidate will be successful in the classroom. In an attempt to synthesize the attributes of a competent teacher, Guest (1993) pulled from reform reports the following six characteristics:

- An in-depth knowledge of subject area and its pedagogy
- An understanding of child and adolescent development
- Knowledge of teaching and learning
- Understanding of the world
- Social relationships within a classroom
- An insatiable desire to learn (Guest, 1993, p. 3)

Guest's list of *characteristics* is global in nature, whereas Mary Dietz of Alverno College coverts the list eight *abilities* essential for preservice teachers to acquire, to know and be able to do (Scherer, 1995):

- Communication
- Problem solving
- Critical thinking
- Valuing and decision making
- Social interaction
- Global perspectives
- Effective citizenship
- Aesthetic responsiveness

Both lists reflect the new learning standards and outcomes for our students. These items go beyond the teacher as instructor and imparter of information to a co-learner and facilitator of information. These items also reflect a change in the learning environment. With the knowledge base expanding exponentially every day, both students and teachers need to be able to be critical thinkers and problem-solvers.

Rural Teacher Preparation

Although preparing students for the 21st century is set at the national level as the purpose of teaching, *states* determine *how* this will be carried out. The purpose of teaching is influenced by political and social obligation of the community, state, and nation as well as the personal commitments held by teachers. This overarching matter of "how" then gives rise to this question: How should rural teachers be prepared so that they, in turn, can prepare their students to be literate and responsible citizens and ready to live in a democratic society for the upcoming century?

In the 1991 Federal Interagency Committee on Education's document, An Agenda for Research and Development on Rural Education, six priorities were identified. The fourth priority focused on human resources for rural schools--recruitment, retention, professional development, administration, and supervision. Three research questions from this priority were proposed:

1. What strategies have been successful in helping rural schools compete favorably with urban schools to hire and retain good teachers?

2. How do administrators help good rural teachers maintain their effectiveness? For example, what strategies have been most successful for releasing rural teachers from their classrooms for professional development?

3. What has been the impact of recent state certification mandates on teacher availability in rural schools compared with urban schools? What strategies are being used to comply with the mandates and with what results? (Federal Interagency Committee on Education, 1991)

These three questions juxtapose the dynamic role of the rural and urban counterparts. Some teachers may be location bound and accept the teaching position available--whether it is rural or not. Some teachers may have the choice to teach in a rural or nonrural school. The teachers who choose rural locales do so because of the many positive features of working in a small, rural school, i.e., smaller class size, more teacher autonomy, and more opportunities to get to know individual students (Matthes & Carlson, 1986). Many teachers who choose rural settings often do so because they are originally from rural and small places. Schmuck and Schmuck interviewed 119 rural teachers as part of a 1988 study. Results indicated that 90 percent of respondents had been raised in communities close to where they were currently teaching (Lemke, 1994), implying that those who have had the rural experience appreciate the circumstances presented.

In a study by Barker and Beckner (1987), it appears that the deans of colleges of education also believe that teaching in a rural area is different from other settings therefore would require specialized preparation. Almost half of the respondents said that "teaching in a small school is different than teaching in a large school and needs a different preparation," and one-third of the respondents replied that 'provisions should be provided

by our institutions to train teachers for rural/small schools' (Barker & Beckner, 1987, p. 2).

In a study of rural school board members, rural school principals and rural teachers, Reece (1987) studied perceptions regarding the preparation of rural teachers and the availability of professional services as well as education resources. Fifty percent of the teachers and principals indicated that there should be some specific preservice training for rural teachers. Yet, less than ten percent of the teachers reported completing specific courses designed for rural schools, specific content related to rural schools within regular courses, or programs designed for teaching in a rural setting. Student teaching in a rural area was seen by 85 percent of the rural teachers surveyed as useful in preparing them for their role. They also indicated that method courses in specific content courses by elementary and secondary levels also helped.

The rural teachers, school board members, principals and the deans of the colleges of education agree there is a need to prepare preservice teachers especially for the rural teaching environment. Within the overall need, one major issue to be addressed in the preparation program is isolation. Haughey and Murphy (1983) stated that "...isolation was a multi-dimensional phenomenon consisting of social, personal, professional, cultural and recreational items" (Haughey & Murphy, 1983, p. 4). Isolation presents a set of facets for preservice teachers who wish to teach in the rural areas that are different from facets found in suburban and urban areas.

Another issue concerns preparation of a rural teacher as a generalist. Currently, some states require a degree in education with multiple methods courses. Usually a grade range is selected, elementary or secondary. Other states require a degree in a specific content field with supplementary education courses. For a preservice teacher pondering teaching in a remote area, a single-focus content area will not provide adequate preparation. Survival in the rural areas depends upon the ability to be a generalist (Beasley, 1988).

Many colleges of education find it difficult to accommodate the need for rural teachers to be prepared to be a generalist, able to face the isolation, and have a rural field experience.

> There are extra costs to provide supervision of student teachers placed at greater distance from the institution. Even in instances where teacher education programs have a network of qualified off-campus supervisors, they may not be available to visit remote locations as often as necessary. Finding qualified and willing classroom teachers in schools that are also well run is an ongoing challenge for a teacher education program, even in nearby communities. It takes an unusual commitment and effort by a teacher education program to find and maintain good rural placements in remote locations (Batey & Hart-Landsberg, 1993, p. 15).

A review of the professional schools in the United States indicates very few examples of programs to prepare teachers for rural areas (Allen, 1984; Barker & Beckner, 1987; Jones, 1987; Muse 1978). "Only a limited number of rural practitioner programs exist for health

professions and a few more for rural education and human services. Most programs, even those found in rural schools, are either generic or urban-oriented." (Threadway, 1992, p. 139).

Attributes of Rural Teacher Preparation Programs

There are many aspects to teaching in a rural environment which are not necessarily included in a regular teacher preparation program. For example, supervising extracurricular activities is rarely, if ever, a part of the teacher education program. Teachers must coach the basketball team and drive the bus while balancing the classroom duties of grading papers, preparing for the next lesson, and assessing student progress. Even if the rural teacher is not athletically inclined, there is always the drama club, debate team and yearbook staff needing an advisor (Batey & Hart-Landsberg, 1993, Muse, 1980).

College method courses address teaching varying abilities within a class, but teaching multiage classrooms usually is not included. Yet, many rural teachers find they are teaching a combination of grades in a single class. And, the teachers discover that they have to teach outside their content area--the high school certified biology teacher may also teach earth science, physics and chemistry to junior high and high school level students. Teaching in rural areas may also mean materials and resources are lacking. A rural teacher needs to rely on creative problem solving and incorporating the surroundings into the lesson plans (Batey & Hart-Landsberg, 1993; Miller, 1994).

In yet another example, adjusting to a new community is not a part of a teacher preparation program. Whether it is a remote rural area or the inner city, teachers are on their own to adapt. Sink or swim. As for adapting to cultural differences within the community or between the community and the teacher, the superintendent or principal may screen applicants for abilities that include adapting to a fishbowl environment where all their actions and moves are scrutinized (Muse, 1978).

Because of the need for specialized preservice training in rural education, some programs and strategies have been developed with attributes to meet these needs. Some examples:

- In 1981, The University of Vermont decided to revise its relationship with the rural school districts. "The university has redesigned its graduate-level curriculum and administrative structure so schools will have greater access to training despite their isolation" (Clarke & Hood, 1986). Eleven off-campus sites offered the master's programs, to decrease the commute for teachers. University faculty and local school boards collaborated so that the students within the master's program would be actively involved in local school improvement. The school district learned to use the credit courses to manage their school improvement, with research projects locally based.

- The University of Maine redesigned their undergraduate teacher preparation program to help the transition of the preservice teacher into the classroom. The new program stressed field experiences throughout the four years. The university bused the students to the schools whenever possible. Otherwise, the students depended on private transportation. Each of the field experiences reflected the coursework of that particular semester. Upon graduation, the new teacher was adequately socialized within the classroom environment (Perry & Rog, 1989).

- The University of Victoria, British Columbia, revised their preservice teacher preparation program so that preservice teachers wishing to teach in rural areas were required to take their third- and fourth-year courses at a satellite campus located in a rural area. With this requirement, all field experiences were then held in rural communities. During the third year, the preservice teachers were required to fulfill a four-month practicum in which they taught in a multigrade classroom, participated in extra-curricular activities, and became involved in community affairs. After the fourth year, the preservice teacher was eligible for a teaching certificate, but would need to go back to the main university for a fifth year to earn a degree (Haughey & Murphy, 1983).

- In the mid-seventies, Brigham Young University (BYU) initiated the Rural Elementary Teacher Training (RETT) project. Ten years later, it was still going strong. The main characteristic of the project was an eight week live-in experience for the student teacher. The student teacher was required to live with a rural family and be immersed in the rural culture and community (Campbell, 1986).

- In the Northwest states, participants in project SMART (Science and Mathematics Academies for Rural Teachers) devised ways to inform preservice teachers of necessary skills needed to survive in a rural teaching environment. One method was to take the rural school environment to the university campus by means of a slide show. The purpose was to expose preservice teachers to the attributes of teaching in rural areas. Many of the students had not considered teaching in a rural area. The slide show showed how community involvement was a key to success. A second method was to model a lesson that one would give in a rural Montana school. A third method to introduce preservice teachers to the rural environment was through an optional one credit course. The student spent a week immersed in a rural school and living in the community (Batey & Hart-Landsberg, 1993).

- Lewis-Clark State College (LCSC) uses a community/college partnership approach to preparing their teachers for rural areas (Parker, 1985). Education majors are encouraged to be multi-faceted, i.e., endorsements in several content areas, a special education endorsement, participation in co-curricular activities and participation in professional organizations. One example of the partnership approach is that the rural school districts have identified their instructional aides as being a professional resource. In response, LCSC works with the aides via

correspondence studies and inservice activities so they may gain teacher certification. The partnership approach provides for the input of the rural community and school districts so that the education of preservice teachers will mirror the reality of what the future will hold for the teacher.

- In Arkansas, the preservice program for elementary rural teachers incorporates a generalist approach plus the addition of a special education venue. Mainstreaming is becoming a part of every school. In the rural areas, there is rarely a teacher whose sole responsibility is special education. To help prepare the rural elementary teacher, human growth, development, assessment and individualized instruction have been infused as part of the basic education program (Bell & Steinmiller, 1987).

- Technology as a link between student teachers and the college of education is being seen as a method for overcoming the barriers of isolation, limited funding and limited educational opportunities (Clarken, 1993). The use of an e-mail seminar for a pilot computer networking study was tried at the Northern Michigan University. Computer equipment was loaned to the student to use in the field. While in the field, the students were required to be enrolled in a seminar class that solely ran through e-mail conferences. Before going out in the field, the students met for a couple sessions to learn about using the computer equipment and to meet each other. While in the field, many obstacles arose due to problems with the computer hardware and software. The student teachers found the use of e-mail to communicate with their peers and college faculty to be very helpful. Yet, they missed having the face-to-face contact.

- Bemidji University in northern Minnesota adopted a distance learning program to reach potential rural teacher education students in their geographical location, thereby decreasing the need for the students to leave their family and jobs to go to the university to earn their teaching certificate (Halcrow, 1989). Courses were offered during the evening and on weekends. In the last quarter of their third year, the students adapted to a day schedule for student teaching.

- From 1986 to 1989, Western Montana College (WMC) was awarded a Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) grant to improve rural teacher preparation (Spuhler, 1989). To help overcome high teacher turnover rates and attract highly qualified teachers to the rural schools, WMC proposed to develop a new curriculum to train teachers for rural and small schools, establish laboratory sites, and establish a sophomore- and junior-level field experience. WMC also offers a course called Exploratory Field Experience for education majors early in their college careers. This class requires students to analyze a school and its community, paying close attention to the demographics, geography, philosophies, and politics of the community. WMC values this course because students are faced with many of the realities of teaching in a small community, forcing them to think about whether teaching is what they thought it would be, if

they still want to become teachers, and if so, at what level (Western Montana College, 1995).

- Iowa State University (Hoy, 1985) uses technology to bring the rural classroom into the university setting. Live broadcasts are beamed from the rural school classrooms to the university. This method allows preservice teachers to observe a classroom over a period of days or months without the expense of traveling or intruding on the classroom setting.

There is a need to have an avenue by which a preservice teacher may focus on teaching in a rural environment. An emphasis to increase field experiences in rural schools and to increase student-school interaction via technology has been undertaken by some universities.

Along with specifically rural-education attributes of teacher preparation programs, it is also useful to examine the characteristics of rural teachers which help promote success. This examination helps inform improvements or adjustments in current teacher preparation programs.

Attributes of Rural Teachers

Ten years ago, Horn suggested the following list as the "ideal" characteristics of a rural school teacher:

- Certified and able to teach in more than one subject area or grade level
- Prepared to supervise several extracurricular activities
- Able to teach a wide range of abilities in a single classroom
- Able to adjust to the uniqueness of the community in terms of social opportunities, life styles, shopping areas, and continuously being scrutinized
- Able to overcome the students' cultural differences and add to his/her understanding of the larger society. (Horn, 1985)

These four characteristics still stand. A group of eight rural elementary teachers from small Northwest schools developed a list of traits that teachers need to be successful in a rural school. (Sjolander, 1995)

- The teacher must have the following characteristics:
  - Dedicated
  - Tireless
  - Self-sufficient
  - Resourceful
  - Sense of humor
  - Self-validating
  - Open minded
  - Flexible and adaptable
  - People person--versatile
  - Diplomatic
  - Creative
  - Ability to teach outside "field"
- The teacher must be able to adjust to:
  - Isolation
  - Small budget
  - Community traditions
  - Local economics and stereotypes
  - Poor living conditions
  - Poor/nonexistent health services

- The teacher must be able to assume many roles:
  Social worker
  Counselor
  Handyperson

In recruiting teachers for rural areas, part of the unspoken criteria is to find someone who can effectively deal with teaching a broad range of subjects, geographic isolation, geographic/cultural diversity and sparcity, and the rural life style. Is the person ready to teach in a self-contained classroom with multiple grade levels, and ready to accept extra duties, such as coaching, fund-raising, chaperoning, and club activities? The following list of positive and negative attributes of teaching in a rural area, were identified by Guenther and Weible (1983), Horn (1985), and Stern (1994).

Positive Attributes

- Small instructional unit size
- Individualized instruction
- Fewer interpersonal and organizational problems
- Ability to know each child as an individual
- Ability to approach problems without generalized policies
- Greater student and parental participation in schools and school activities
- Heterogeneity of social class

Negative Attributes

- Limited multicultural experiences
- Multiple subject preparations
- Limited scope of offerings
- Limited faculty and administration
- Low salary
- Having to adapt the urban models to fit rural school needs
- Not much time or people for collegiality or team work
- Frequently less experienced teaching staff with fewer advanced degrees than nonrural

The ideal preservice teacher education program capitalizes on the attributes of successful rural teachers. But, educators know, receiving a teaching certificate is only the *beginning* of learning to teach. Lifelong learning and professional development are important keys to successful teaching.

Professional Development

> *Beginning with preservice education and continuing throughout a teacher's career, teacher development must focus on deepening teachers' understanding of the process of teaching and learning and of the students they teach. Effective professional development involves teachers both as learners and as teachers and allows them to struggle with uncertainties that accompany each role* (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995).

Professional development has different names and ramifications for individuals--staff development, inservice, and continuing education. Dobson and Dobson (1985) differentiates between inservice and continuing education--inservice is a responsibility of the school and continuing education is a responsibility of the teacher. No matter which label is used, the process must be understood.

The Professional Development Team, organized by the United States Department of Education, is creating principles of professional development as requested by Secretary Richard Riley and Deputy Secretary Madeleine Kunin. These professional development principles are:

- Focuses on teachers as central to school reform, yet includes all members of the school community
- Respects and nurtures the intellectual capacity of teachers and others in the school community
- Reflects best available research practice in teaching, learning, and leadership
- Is planned principally by those who will participate in that development
- Enables teachers to develop expertise in content, pedagogy, and other essential elements in teaching to high standards
- Enhances leadership capacity among teachers, principals, and others
- Requires ample time and other resources that enable educators to develop their individual capacity, and to learn and work together
- Promotes commitment to continuous inquiry and improvement imbedded in the daily life of schools

- Is driven by a coherent long-term plan that incorporates professional development as essential among a broad set of strategies to improve teaching and learning

- Is evaluated on the basis of its impact on teacher effectiveness, student learning, leadership, and the school community, and this evaluation guides subsequent professional development efforts (Kunin, 1994).

Sparks and Loucks-Horsley (Klapper et al., 1994) examined the different types and activities of professional development. They found that the activities could be categorized into five areas or models.

1. Individually guided staff development, in which teachers both plan and undertake those activities that they see as promoting their own learning

2. Observations/assessment, i.e., peer observation and review of teachers' professional activities

3. Involvement in a development/improvement process in which teachers develop curriculum, design new programs, or are integrally involved in school change

4. Training, which involves the acquisition of knowledge and/or schools through some form of instruction

5. Inquiry, meaning the use of observation and data collection upon which to base changes in instruction and classrooms (Klapper et al., 1994, p. 3).

Whether the activity is school initiated or teacher initiated, and no matter what the professional development activity is called, it is imperative that front-line school staff who will participate in the professional development activities are invested in the process and see the rationale for change (Maddox & Vadasy, 1995). Beckner further expands this issue for rural staff development. "Staff development must follow a model that emphasizes control of the effort by teachers, according to needs recognized as important to implementation of the stated goals and objectives." (Beckner, 1987, p. 18).

Teachers, regardless of whether they are in rural or urban areas, are supplementing their professional development on their own time and outside the classroom. Through networking, teachers pursue topics that are of intrinsic interest to them or have immediate applicable value (Lieberman, 1995). In studying teacher networks and peer-based support, Stoops (1993) found that teachers benefited from this method for curriculum

renewal. Teacher networks are beneficial in other areas as well. For instance, through networks the teachers are able to overcome the professional isolation factor. They are able to:

- Increase communication among members
- Improve trust and rapport among members
- Reduce isolation
- Establish collegial relationships
- Focus attention on teachers' continuing classroom needs
- Offer building assistance to other teachers
- Create a powerful, yet inexpensive form of professional development
- Validate individual classroom practice
- Supply field-tested materials and resources
- Become a district resource available to other teachers and administrators
- Provide access to additional professionalization opportunities

(Stoops, 1993)

Reasons for professional development vary. They may range from an individual teacher focus to a whole educational system focus. The outcomes of professional development vary just as widely, from a teacher learning a new skill to systemic reform within the entire school district. Professional development for teachers has grown beyond the one-shot, fix-all workshop to looking at the continuum for educational change. Today it is not unusual for professional development to include, as part of its function, work on policy or local issues by groups of teachers.

Professional Development for Rural Teachers

The needs for and the availability of professional development differ between rural and nonrural areas (Williams, 1994).

Mancus and Rodriguez (1980) points out that "teachers in isolated rural districts have not had ready access to continued professional development, rigid though it may be, as have teachers in more populated areas who attend local universities and colleges." She suggests forming consortiums of districts and the building of Teacher Centers. Teacher Centers become a resource for rural teachers--offering workshops of pertinence to the specific area and the opportunity to network with other rural schools.

Allen (1984) indicates three categories where the rural/nonrural differences commonly occur: administration, isolation/size and history. Table 6, though not exhaustive, lists the factors concerning professional development in rural versus nonrural school districts.

Table 6

Staff Development Factors, Rural versus Urban

Small, Rural and Isolated Schools	Metropolitan Area Schools
ADMINISTRATION	
Administrators frequently have multiple assignments as superintendent, principal and teacher. Sometimes there is only a head teacher who does not meet with the board.	Administrators usually have only one assignment or their multiple assignments are similar in nature, such as assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction.
School board policy usually does not contain provisions governing professional development, especially if administrative staff do not meet with the board.	School board policy usually contains some provisions governing professional staff development.
The community and board are frequently unclear about the purpose and value of professional staff development activities and will not support them with funds or staff time.	Usually the board and community are knowledgeable about and encourage professional staff development activities and support them to some extent in the budget.
Because of overextended time commitments administrative staff do not have time to keep up with the research and literature and therefore may not be familiar with sources for staff development or the opportunities available.	Most staff have more access to and more time to keep current on the research and literature and can therefore make better-informed choices on topics of interest.
ISOLATION AND SIZE	
Isolation and distances create, at the very least, an inconvenience to staff in getting to sources of staff development, and frequently can cause great hardship.	Isolation and distances are not seen as problems since most of staff development resources are located in metropolitan areas or are easily accessible.
Size of staff is frequently a problem in two ways. Small size means multiple grade or content assignments and thus a wider range of needs for the deliverers, and small size often results in fewer resources available to secure staff development services.	Size of staff is usually not a serious concern in the same way it is to the smaller schools. It may be a concern because of large numbers of staff rather than small numbers.
Isolation can be a problem because there may be a shortage of qualified substitutes available to free regular staff for professional development activities.	There is generally an abundant supply of substitute teachers in a metropolitan area.

Small, Rural and Isolated Schools	Metropolitan Area Schools
HISTORY OR "TRACK RECORD"	
Unless a direct and immediate change is seen following a staff development activity, the board and community tend to think the activity was non-productive.	Because of the size of schools and community, a direct relationship between staff development and change in instruction is not expected to be obvious.
Because of some of the problems identified above, staff may frequently see staff development activities as a waste of valuable time that might otherwise have been devoted to other productive activities. This builds a general resistance.	Some of the same resistance may develop over time, but because of the size of staff and the different combinations of staff who may take part in any one activity the problem is not so obvious.
Lack of understanding of the work setting or the special work conditions, on the part of the presenters, frequently leads to inappropriate topics or presentations or level of sophistication, thus leading staff to feel talked-down-to or being misled on the topic, or seeing the activity as irrelevant. This leads to strong negative attitudes about staff development activities.	Presenters are usually from metropolitan areas and are most usually experienced in these settings so these problems are not as prevalent. When they do occur, the size of the staff usually diffuses the problem, making it less obvious.

(Allen, 1984, p. 4-5)

Some of the important issues in delivering and organizing successful inservice opportunities for rural teachers are depicted in the following examples.

- Stoops (1993) found that rural school administrators supported the teachers networking endeavors. Yet, there was no indication of when the teachers networked--was this seen as an instructional or a non-instructional duty? As to a financial concern, some schools were prepared to network electronically. Otherwise, they needed to make an investment in equipment and phone line charges. Schools not prepared to network electronically had to rely upon the postal system, faxes and personal travel, all which incur expenses.

- At Oklahoma State University's College of Education, faculty and district administrators formed a committee to design a master's degree program that would involve both inservice and continuing education for teachers in rural areas. In the CE/MORE program (Continuing Education Through Multi-Optional Renewal Experiences), approximately two-thirds of the course work was offered at the school site and a third at the university. The classes were offered at times to accommodate the adult learner, such as weekends and between semesters. The curriculum offered consisted of the traditional graduate education program, but adapted to the local setting. Emphasis was placed on rural classroom dynamics, the rural environment in which they lived

and taught, cooperative learning and collaboration with the university (Dobson & Dobson, 1985).

- Inservice and professional development delivery to a rural school off the main island in Hawaii is normally offered by professors flying to the site. With advances in technology, long distance learning opportunities are beginning to take hold. Barker and Burnett (1991) investigated a combination of delivery methods for inservice to reach a rural Hawaiian school district. Due to the expense of traveling and lack of time, the teachers needed the course to be held onsite. A three-hour college course was offered in which 40 of the hours were taught by a fly-in professor, 32 of the hours were taught by a professor onsite and eight hours were taught via audiographics. It was found that the audiographics segment was more expensive per hour then flying in a professor. The evaluation of the course showed that the participants agreed that the all three methods of inservice delivery were acceptable. Even though the participants liked the audiographic communication, they felt that "in person" was more effective. Like rural areas in different parts of the United States, phone lines need to be upgraded and mail service is not always dependable. The Hawaiian inservice course experienced problems with both, such as materials taking two to three weeks to arrive and having a "pulse" line instead of a "tone" line.

- Rather than drive 200 miles to the university or being part of a non-interactive satellite class, teachers in northern Montana are receiving two-interactive compressed video in rural settings. With a series of grants from the Rural Electrification Program, Northern Montana University, school districts, businesses, communities and local telephone companies are forming consortiums. One of the objectives of the consortiums is to deliver teacher inservice via two-way video. Sites in Montana currently experimenting with this new form of communication and training include, Saco, Wolf Point and Havre.

- The use of technology at the College of Education at the University of Wyoming begins at the preservice level and extends into the field for inservice and professional development activities. Technology has become a necessity for university outreach to the rural schools due to insufficient funds and number of faculty who would otherwise have to travel to the rural sites. Interactive compressed video, audio teleconferencing, and electronic mail on the Internet are means by which the College of Education and school districts are connecting (Office of Technology Assessment, 1995).

Lifelong Learning and the Rural Teacher

In June 1995, a leadership group of five rural teacher educators from the Northwest, a director of field services, a director of a Rural Education Center, and three rural teacher educators, participated in the Northwest Regional Rural Teacher Preparation Conference. Their charge was to discuss the role which rural teachers play in educational reform and then design the ideal preservice and inservice programs. The team of rural teacher educators agreed that the best of all systems was one that was continuous--teacher education as a never-ending learning process.

A similar concept was expressed by our Canadian neighbors, who face similar challenges in attracting and retaining qualified teachers in rural settings. Inservice programs are costly for the rural, isolated districts. To overcome the barrier of distance and expense, Storey (1992) suggests "the concept of teacher education as a continuum which begins with program entry and extends through preservice education, induction, and inservice during the practitioner's career as a teacher, involving both teachers and teacher educators in the process" (p. 48). This concept implies a school/university partnership that is lifelong and interdependent.

Professional development schools, similar to teaching hospitals where the doctor and pre-medicine student work side by side, may offer a solution. In the education model, university faculty work with the classroom teachers to train new teachers and conduct research (Bradley, 1995).

Clark (1990) emphasizes the importance of establishing professional development centers for teachers. The centers are to be exemplars of learning and teaching environments, for both preservice and inservice teachers. Within the centers, collaboration between the university, the community and the school district is essential, with mutual agreement as to what is best for the learning environment of the student (teacher and child). In the centers, reflective practices and ongoing renewal is pervasive.

Davis (1995) believes the effort which goes into building a school/university partnership or a professional development center for teachers is well worth the return, with one note of caution--ensure that school issues supersede the university research agenda.

By combining theory, observation and experience, the team of rural teacher educators developed the "ideal professional rural teacher program". It contains traces of the professional development schools and emphasizes lifelong learning for teachers. The team discussed the ideal program in the following segments:

- Preparing rural teachers to engage in reform efforts
- The ideal preservice program for rural teachers
- Induction and the novice teacher
- The ideal inservice program for rural teachers
- Professional development and lifelong learning

Preparing Rural Teachers to Engage in Reform Efforts

Drawing from the research, Berlin and White (1993), who address the role of teachers as reformers through action research. The authors emphasize that research should be done *by* the teachers not *on* the teachers. They propose a higher education program--The Academic Challenge Model (ACP). The model blends educational theory, research and classroom practice. Specific objectives include:

- Provide teachers with knowledge and experiences related to innovative teaching methods and materials
- Provide teachers with knowledge and experiences in order to conduct classroom-based research
- Develop, implement, evaluate, and disseminate innovative teaching methods and materials (Berlin & White, 1993, p. 2)

In keeping with the research, the leadership team envisioned rural teachers as being actively engaged in school reform, whether at the classroom level, district level or state level. The following considerations evolved as the team thought about the interaction between policymakers, school administrators and rural teachers.

- Policymakers imply that teachers are to be leaders
- Teachers rarely read the district policy manuals, so they do not know how the school interprets statewide changes
- Teachers teach according to the guidelines set by the school administration
- Teachers are not necessarily in leadership roles
- School administrators rarely have time to devote within the classroom
- School administrators rely on teachers to help set policy
- Rural teachers can make a difference in the district and the community

To assist educational reform in rural areas, the team proposed that the colleges of education could encourage and enhance the processes through their preservice and inservice programs. Through the higher education process, the team endorsed the development of abilities in preservice students that would prepare rural teachers to be:

- Actively involved with the principals and keep them current of problems in the classroom
- Willing to work with school policy
- Aware of different ways to achieve changes--through university programs, and field-based master's programs
- Ready for the first/second year of teaching
- Possess survival skills
- Willing to attend faculty, school board, and union meetings
- Current on educational policy development and issues
- Sensitive to needs for specific communities since their needs vary place to place
- Involved in group dynamics
- Involved in improving the teaching profession
- Inquiring and reflective
- Able to take accurate reads of the situation
- Able to set their own learning goals
- Knowledgeable in content areas
- Further their education through leadership classes--inservice or master's degree programs
- Able to use (and know when to use) different types of assessment
- Able to communicate with publishing companies

- Able to observe and be aware of divergent or convergent issues
- Aligned with the constructivist view but have knowledge of the behaviorist point of view
- Aware of the importance of the depth and breadth of knowledge
- Part of a site-based management team
- Able to create networks, be self-reliant and to have a pioneering spirit

While teachers in *all* settings are taking on new roles and responsibilities as reform ensues, the rural teacher leadership team keenly recognized that *the rural teacher needs and deserves more help than ever before* to accomplish the tasks that prepare students for today and for what lies ahead, in the community and in the world at large. In the team's view, a teacher preparation continuum that enables lifelong professional learning becomes a foundation for the development of both rural students and teachers who know and can do in a variety of settings.

Ideal Preservice Program for Preparing Rural Teachers

The team members designed the ideal preservice program for rural elementary teachers. By freeing themselves from the common constraints of limited funds, time and resources, the team conceived a plan which they felt would best prepare students for educational reform and the rural teaching environment. The members envisioned preservice teachers organized into cohorts or "pods". To explain, there might be a pod of 20 preservice teachers with a group of four-to-five field teachers from the university and the school district. The pod would work through the preservice program. Field teachers would be compensated relative to the student tuition for the course.

By using the Interstate New Teacher Support and Assessment Consortium (INTASC) model standards for beginning teacher licensing and development, the team members formed common themes in teacher preparation (see Appendix A). Elaborating upon these themes, the team built the following foundation for a rural elementary teacher preparation program.

1. Preservice elementary teachers need academic experiences in sociology, anthropology and writing. An early immersion experience and start of a professional portfolio are important. There should be specific portfolio activities with the portfolio becoming a divergent and convergent activity for the preservice teacher. Preservice teachers need to be able to reflect, debrief, and make career decisions. Maintaining a portfolio or a journal is a habit of the mind. As part of questioning and reflecting, they will be led to consider alternative solutions (INTASC principles 1, 6 and 9).

2. The preservice elementary teacher needs a foundation in learning theory and child development. In building this knowledge, they need to know how to apply it in the school environment. A field classroom could be a source of information. The preservice teachers and the classroom teacher could be connected via telecommunications (phone line, interactive video, one-way video, and videos). In this manner the preservice teacher would be linked to the day-to-day happenings in the classroom. The preservice teachers could practice the teaching method, cooperative decisionmaking or communication style with peers during a university class. Preservice teachers might hold a mock trial and present a current issue in front of the "school board" (composed of their peers) (INTASC principles 2,3, and 5).

3. At the sophomore level, the preservice elementary teacher should have strategies, assessment, and integrative methodologies with concurrent field work. The real classroom experience begins at this stage. During the field experience, the preservice teacher is to sit in on parent-teacher conferences, and establish a professional acquaintance with the school administration. During the junior year, traditional method classes could be integrated (INTASC principles 4,7, and 8).

4. Higher education is to model collegiality, form cohorts, prepare a veteran teacher in the field to help mentor a first year teacher, and create the link and potential support for a long-term relationship with alumnae beyond graduation. The veteran teacher would be a full partner in modeling the desired competencies, how the generalist functions, how to involve the community and how to form networks (INTASC principle 10).

5. With so much national information available, preservice teachers need to be exposed to the resources. Few teachers take professional leadership courses that show the ways to find the needed resources. This is critical for students and teachers coming from a rural context. It is also important that rural teachers and students realize that important information also comes from within the community and not to rely solely on outside data. The often faulty assumption is that everything from outside the area is more important, rendering the local teacher as unknowledgeable and unimportant. By using the constructivist approach, students and teachers may find the information needed in their small community; this is very important psychologically (envelopes all 10 INTASC principles).

The team members noted that more research in rural teacher preparation and education is needed. Local educators rarely engage in reflective inquiry because, when research is needed, it is easiest to call someone else. To help alleviate this situation, the team envisioned an ideal professional teacher program model as a dynamic three-way communication cycle encouraging action research between university faculty, field teachers and preservice teachers:

- The teachers in the field (veteran and first year teachers) give feedback to the preservice program regarding what works and what doesn't
- The teachers and faculty are connected via laptop computers
- The veteran teacher has a partial teaching load to allow time to "mentor" the first year teacher and to be involved with the university or school district on administrative issues
- The preservice teachers have access to the field teachers for field experiences
- The first year teacher will not be assigned the most difficult class and will not have a full teaching load. A full load is something to aspire to in terms of the profession. The first year will be an internship or residency. Teachers will gradually build their repertoire of survival skills
- A seminar for preservice teachers addresses problems concerning the larger educational system--the "big picture"

Induction and the Novice Teacher

The team suggested novice teachers be inducted slowly into the rural school. The ideal scenario is for the novice teacher to have a partial teaching load, increasing over a period of three years teaching assignments and extracurricular activities.

The field teacher (a veteran teacher assigned to work with the novice teacher) also has a less than full teaching/extracurricular activity load with time to interact with the novice teacher and the college of education. The field teachers provide feedback to higher education staff about mentoring activities that work, noting areas where knowledge is needed, and further encouraging collaboration to meet the needs of rural teachers. It is critical, according to the team, for the novice teacher to be connected to the university with a laptop computer, and to communicate on a fairly regular basis.

The concept of teacher induction is different and difficult for both the field teacher and the novice teacher. To help ease the transition for both sides, the field teacher may be trained at the college of education for the leadership/facilitator role. Duties of the field teacher include:

- Answering the novice teacher's questions
- Showing the novice teacher around the school and community
- Introducing the novice to the people and culture of their new environment
- Giving moral support

- Showing the novice how to develop professional communication with peers and administrators
- Listening and assuring confidentiality
- Providing friendship
- Explaining unwritten rules, taboos, mores and values which are not normally voiced in that specific community

Over the three-year period, the novice teacher will grow from the neophyte stage of being a classroom assistant to becoming co-teacher and finally an independent teacher. Through the induction process, the novice teacher will grow towards independence as opposed to dependence on the field teacher, ready to go on to a full-fledged teaching position.

Part of the involvement by the college of education is to help formulate the description of the field teacher. And, with district collaboration, the university may offer credit and specific courses to aid the field teachers.

As the novice teacher engages in professional experiences, including an orientation to networking, the college of education develops critical questions along the way, as opposed to just chatting every week. This calls for specific probes, such as a guided journal, urging novice teachers to think about issues or experiences and the implications. A reciprocal exchange of information between the novice teacher and higher education staff occurs. The novice provides first-hand information. This becomes then, a field-based inquiry for higher education--qualitative research. The novice teacher becomes the giver of information *and* seeker of knowledge. This is action research; the novice teacher becomes a peer with the university faculty.

Ideal Inservice Plan for Rural Teachers

Traditional assumptions of teacher development and professionalization are changing, team members pointed out. Inservice needs to be personal, dynamic and reciprocal. Rather than inservice as something "done" to teachers, it becomes instead useful activities initiated in part *by* the teachers. There is a call for active interplay of novice and veteran teachers.

While the team viewed the inservice needs of novice teachers (those who have been in the field for one to three years), veteran teachers (those in the field over three years) and field teachers (veteran teachers who coach novice teachers) as being separate, an implied link exists to be cultivated and developed. The novice teachers need to acclimate to their new environment. Through the implied linkage, novices may take a trip through the town or attend a BBQ with faculty and children. A teacher buddy system offers considerable

benefits to the novice by providing an empathetic, low-risk bond with a peer teacher, someone to ask questions of, not necessarily a mentor, but a friend.

The team members made a distinct clarification in the field teacher's role. By using the word "mentor," it implies that there is unequal balance between two people, one is "less than" the other. This reflects the authoritarian model of top-down learning and administration. Mentoring systems are not always strong because, on a conceptual basis, the novice teacher strives to be an equal of the mentor teacher. To overcome this barrier, helps to identify the mentor teacher as a colleague or field teacher. A colleague implies equality and a more democratic method of knowledge exchange. It was agreed by the team that mentoring activities should not be an evaluation or an assessment.

For example, in the Montana three year mentorship program, the field teacher is *not* in the evaluation position. The field teacher is one who has experience and is respected, friendly and open. If possible, teachers with similar interests or content areas are matched. In a few cases the field teacher has been located off site, but it works better on site. The teachers need to have common planning periods.

Another example includes Eastern Washington State, which guarantees to districts that novice teachers from Eastern Washington State will have certain qualifications, skills, and knowledge. If any of their teacher education graduates have difficulty during their first year of teaching based on the preservice preparation program, the college of education will investigate and devise assistance. The college of education engages in the professionalization of their students. This guarantee is "preventive maintenance." Because the college of education is made aware of any defects in their preparation program, it and remedy and adjust where necessary.

Professional Development and Lifelong Learning

It is not possible to rely on the districts to support the whole mentoring system. Yet, it is important that the ownership of professional development be lodged in the district, rather than an outside influence.

Teachers are professionals. Yet, they are forced to make decisions between their profession and personal obligations. In rural settings, for example, if the professional development meetings or inservice workshops are planned on the opening day of hunting season, the teacher will most likely go hunting to ensure a supply of venison for the winter. An overriding sense of loyalty to the teaching profession may not prevail when choices are made. This could be due in part to the economic situation. Many teachers need a second income to support their family. For example, they teach during the year and become construction workers during the summer. Another common rural theme is that farming responsibilities dominate over teaching responsibilities. Professional development may help provide a connection between teaching and the community with an awareness of community priorities and events taken into account when planning

professional development activities. It is also important to involve the school support staff. They, too, need to develop professionally.

The team members felt that the mentoring system could also be applied to administrative roles. In many rural communities, the teachers are place bound. They do not have the opportunity to return to the university to gain a graduate degree or administrative credentials. Through the mentoring process, a teacher might move into the role of principal. For example, if there is not a principal in place, a teacher might earn a portion of the principal's salary for performing related duties; the remaining salary goes to a mentor principal and to the university for training and certification of the teacher. The leadership team recommended that some of the funds pay for membership in a professional organization.

The veteran teacher and school administration, as a team, need to make choices, such as how much time to delegate for teaching, mentoring, and site-based management. The same is true with professional development. Does the field teacher wish to pursue mentoring novice teachers, shift into school administration or be more involved with university research? This teacher-development team needs to choose among the options.

Higher education provides an avenue to help the teachers gain knowledge of educational reform and renewal. Collaboration between the college of education, the school district, and the teachers is a way to determine professional development needs and the best delivery system. Professional development allows the teachers to keep moving up and become more sophisticated. School districts can help teachers by alleviating some of the non-educational duties, such as collecting magazine money

Professional development principles proposed by the leadership team include:

- Lifelong learning
- Problem solving
- Action research
- Recognition and awards
- Sabbaticals and conferences
- Educational policy and issues
- Graduate programs that are application-based
- Interaction with the school board

The leadership team suggested ways in which higher education could be actively involved with inservice and professional development activities in rural school districts:

- Consortium advisory body
- Community awards, recognition
- Professional education advisory board
- College recognition of the teacher for something well done
- Teacher of the month
- Collective bargaining, such as offering a university school finance and budget class
- Rural teacher development in grant writing and fund raising
- The economic connection, sustaining the community and sustaining the school

The economic connection between the school and the community is a significant rural factor. To help rural teachers under the community-development issues involved, recognizing the school as often the largest employer in the community, the leadership team advocated the inclusion in professional development activities of the economics department of higher education institutions.

Conclusion

Through synthesizing existing research and interaction with rural teacher educators and rural teachers, an Impressionist's portrait of the rural teacher emerges. The edges indistinct as the eye mixes the pure colors, giving the impression of different hues. The pure colors represent the various talents and roles required of rural teachers to make the school a complete and pleasing picture.

This report sheds light on the various roles and attributes of a rural teacher. In reference to the title, we do have great expectations of our rural teachers. Through research and input from the field, it has been found that there should be special programs to address the needs of rural teachers.

In reviewing the ideal preservice and inservice plans developed by the team, members, raised a question: Is this truly rural specific or just an overall good plan for all teachers? In the ensuing discussion, it was agreed that the plan could be adapted to meet other needs, but it was truly *a plan for rural teachers*. There was a sensitivity to variables of isolation, culture, limited resources, and reform issues. In many rural places, linguistic and cultural patterns differ from their urban, suburban and metro counterparts.

Professional development, reform, and improvement in a rural area are very personal. A specialized curriculum could be significant in helping to prepare educators for the realities of living and teaching in a rural setting, i.e., special topics such as working with multiage groups, peer tutoring, cooperative learning, teaching outside their area of specialization, how to work with the rural community, and how to find needed resources. Campbell (1985) summarizes the need for specialized course for rural teachers:

> There is little question that preparing teachers for rural schools requires added consideration in learning about various rural cultures, how they organize, how one identifies their social divisions, i.e., power structures, familial relationships, etc. Before a teacher-candidate does his/her student-teaching or as a part of an observation experience in rural settings, these abilities for sensitivity and understanding should be a part of the training, and again be reinforced before recommendation for a teaching certificate be given (Campbell, 1985).

To further make the point of specialized training and outreach for rural teachers, survey results (Dunne, 1981) indicate that rural teachers report they need the following skills in order to be successful in the field:

1. We must learn to identify the strengths of rural communities and rural life, and use them as the basis for the construction of innovative teaching and curriculum development techniques.

2. We must learn to look at technology to provide small-scale, individually tailored curriculum which are not practical in the small setting. A microcomputer and an hour or two a week of teacher time can teach students German II or Calculus, or many of your other low-frequency courses.

3. We must learn how to cooperate with others like us to achieve common goals. This last skill is the most difficult to acquire--and the most important. Rural people are not used to cooperation among communities; we have developed what Alan Peshkin calls 'the habit of suspicion' towards our neighbors, and this limits our accomplishments. But this 'habit of suspicion' must be overcome, or else you might as well make your plans for reorganization with the nearest large school district (Dunne, 1981).

Taking into consideration the needs of the rural teachers, the community and the university, a dynamic relationship and a delicate balance emerges. The ideal rural professional teacher continuum reflects this balance and develops a triad relationship among the college of education faculty, the field teachers and the novice teachers. The model suggests a closed system between the schools and the universities. However, this is not the intent. The community is regarded as an integral part of the school, they go hand-in-hand.

Great expectations of rural teachers implies that they are in a lifelong learning mode--on a quest for more knowledge. Great expectations also implies the need for collaboration between community, universities and teachers to actively engage in educational reform. The following recommendations are means by which we can support our rural teachers, engage in reform efforts, and be better prepared to meet the challenges of a rural environment.

Recommendations

The leadership team suggested the following topics for further exploration.

Technology

The role of technology was recognized as important in preservice and professional development activities. The ideal scenario would be to have everyone networked via interactive videos and/or laptops.

Exchange Teachers and Professors

It would be advantageous to have a university professor modeling teaching in a real classroom in a rural setting. The professor would be able to engage students, teachers, and the community to learn more about the uses of technology. University classes from the field would be transmitted by two-way interactive video, field experience students would have a local supervisor and the community would have a new resource. By

exchanging field teachers and university faculty, the isolation factor would diminish. The field teacher would be able to spend a semester at the university as an adjunct professor or as a graduate student.

University/School Partnership

University faculty, field teachers and novice teachers would be involved in the rural professional teacher continuum. The field and novice teachers would be purposely engaged in action research under a professional researcher at the university. An incentive for rural teachers to be engaged in research might be the aspect of earning master's degree, thus helping the teacher move upward on the career ladder. Another incentive could be professional recognition--valuing the field teacher as a university adjunct professor. Vouchers for university classes and time on Internet and the World Wide Web would also help.

Preservice Preparation of Rural Teachers

The team members support early field experiences in multiple settings and immersion student teaching as the final experience. Courses in anthropology and sociology are encouraged in order for students to gain a good understanding of the social structure and unique dynamics of teaching in small, rural schools.

Inservice and Professional Development for Rural Teachers

Through outreach to rural schools, teachers would be able to become more involved with site-based management and decisionmaking at the school level. A wider variety of topics that emphasize the specifically rural issues would become more accessible through technology and partnerships with universities.

Career Ladder to Career Trellis

A traditional education career ladder involves the teacher becoming a school administrator. A whole new concept in career development was suggested--TRELLIS: Teaching Rural Educators Lifelong Learning in Schools. Instead of a career ladder, there would be a career trellis--begin with the novice teacher at the bottom, show many routes up and out, but stay in the framework of being a teacher. Teachers could climb the trellis, broadening their understanding in a content area, adding more input to school policy, being included in school decisionmaking, gaining respect of their peers and university faculty, and having the ability, time and resources to share with peers what they have learned.

Community/School Partnerships

One area to consider for furthering the rural education agenda is how higher education could incorporate community problem solving in professional development programs.

Teaching Contracts

Examine the possibilities of moving from a nine-month contract year to a twelve month year, teach nine months and spend three months in mentoring and planning. This would be to further the professionalization of teaching.

Local Student-Teacher Supervisors

Examine the possibility of replacing the official state teacher supervisors with a cadre of local people. This proposition raises many questions yet to be answered.

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Appendix A

Model Standards for Beginning Teacher Licensing and Development Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC)

1. The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and can create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for students

2. The teacher understands how children learn and develop and can provide learning opportunities that support their intellectual, social, and personal development.

3. The teacher understands how students differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners.

4. The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage students' development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.

5. The teacher uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning and self-motivation.

6. The teacher uses knowledge of effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.

7. The teacher plans instruction based upon the knowledge of subject matter, students, the community, and curriculum goals.

8. The teacher understands and uses formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual and social development of the learner.

9. The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community) and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally.

10. The teacher fosters relationships with school colleagues, parents, and agencies in the larger community to support students' learning and well-being.

(Excerpted from Darling-Hammond et al., 1995)

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